

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 OMB-01 ACDA-19 NEA-10 EUR-25 AID-20

DRC-01 /179 W

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R 230337Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0309

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1330

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SN

SUBJ: ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING IN SINGAPORE

1. SUMMARY: ACCORDING SOURCES IN ASEAN COUNTRY EMBASSIES IN SINGAPORE, COMMITTEE OF SENIOR ASEAN OFFICIALS WHICH MET IN SINGAPORE MARCH 14 TO 16 DECIDED TO RECOMMEND TO ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN JAKARTA IN MAY NUMBER OF POSSIBLE WAYS IN WHICH PROPOSED SEA ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY COULD BE MANIFESTED. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS INCULDED POSSIBILITY OF PROMOTING UN DECLARATION SUPPORTING ZONE ALONG LINES OF INDIAN OCEAN RESOLUTION.

COMMITTEE ALSO RECOMMENDED ESTABLISHMENT OF ASEAN MACHINERY TO HANDLE BILATERAL DISPUTES BETWEEN ASEAN MEMBERS. SENIOR MALAYSIAN HICOM OFFICIAL CHARACTERIZED MEETING AS RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT AND SAID IT WAS CLEAR SOME GOVERNMENTS, ESPECIALLY SINGAPORE, CONSIDERED ACTION TO GAIN RECOGNITION OF ZONE BY MAJOR POWERS WAS PREMATURE.
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END SUMMARY.

2. SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM ASEAN COUNTRIES MET IN SINGAPORE MARCH 14 TO 16 TO CONTINUE THEIR DELIBERATIONS OF MEANS OF PROMOTING THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION PROPOSING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS WAS THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE SENIOR OFFICIALS COMMITTEE WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS IN NOVEMBER 1971 TO DEVELOP PROPOSALS TO REALIZE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION.

3. THE COMMITTEE RELEASED A PRESS STATEMENT MARCH 16 WHICH DUE TO ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE WAS NOT DISTRIBUTED TO THE PRESS AND EMBASSIES UNTIL MARCH 22. THE STATEMENT SAID COMMITTEE HAD:

(A) "STUDIED THE VARIOUS FORMS OF MANIFESTATIONS BY OUTSIDE POWERS OF THEIR RECOGNITION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE ZONE . . . AND AGREED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE SHOULD BE SUCH MANIFESTATIONS;"

(B) DISCUSSED "SOME INITIAL STEPS" TO ESTABLISH SEA AS SUCH A ZONE;

(C) FELT "STEADY PROGRESS" HAD BEEN MADE TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION FOR THE REALIZATION OF THE ZONE;

(D) "CONSIDERED THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL RESILIENCE, HARMONIZATION OF NATIONAL INTEREST OF ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES WITH REGIONAL INTEREST BOTH LEADING TO REGIONAL RESILIENCE;"

(E) DECIDED TO SUBMIT ITS REPORTS OF THE THIRD AND FOURTH MEETINGS HELD IN BAGUIO AND SINGAPORE TO THE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING TO BE HELD IN JAKARTA IN MAY 1974 AND DECIDED TO HOLD THE NEXT MEETING IN THAILAND AT A VENUE AND DATE TO BE AGREED UPON AND ANNOUNCED LATER.

4. PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR AND INDONESIAN COUNSELOR ADVISED DCM COMMITTEE REPORT WOULD RECOMMEND FOREIGN MINISTERS CONSIDER FOLLOWING POSSIBLE WAYS IN WHICH ZONE COULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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RECOGNIZED AND ACCEPTED BY MAJOR POWERS (US, PRC AND USSR) AS WELL AS OTHER POWERS:

A. PASSAGE OF A UN RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE ZONE -- POSSIBLY ALONG SAME LINES AS UN RESOLUTION ON THE INDIAN OCEAN.

B. UNILATERAL DECLARATION BY THE MAJOR POWERS, ACTING

SEPARATELY OR TOGETHER, RECOGNIZING AND RESPECTING THE ZONE.

C. BILATERAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN RECOGNIZING STATE AND ONE OR MORE OF THE ZONE STATES RECOGNIZING THE ZONE.

5. PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR GARCIA SAID THAT THE PHILIPPINE PAPER PREPARED FOR THIS MEETING (SEE FPM 9199) WAS APPROVED BY COMMITTEE WITH LITTLE CHANGE. INDONESIAN AND MALAYSIAN SOURCES WERE VAGUE AS TO PRECISE NATURE OF "INITIAL STEPS" TO ESTABLISH ZONE WHICH WERE RECOMMENDED BY COMMITTEE, BUT FROM THEIR REMARKS THESE APPEARED TO BE 10 POINTS ENUMERATED IN THE PHILIPPINE PAPER AIMED AT DEFINING THE CONDUCT OF STATES OUTSIDE THE ZONE. (SEE PARA 5, FPM 9199).

6. ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE PRESS STATEMENT AMBASSADOR GARCIA AND INDONESIAN COUNSELOR ASWISMARMO ADVISED DCM COMMITTEE HAD AGREED TO RECOMMEND TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MACHINERY TO RESOLVE BILATERAL DISPUTES BETWEEN ASEAN COUNTRIES. THE NATURE OF THIS MACHINERY WAS APPARENTLY NOT SPECIFIED. ACCORDING TO A NEW ZEALAND HICOMM SOURCE, SINGAPORE PERMSEC MFA BOGAARS SAID GOS FELT ESTABLISHMENT OF MACHINERY TO RESOLVE BILATERAL DISPUTES IN REGION WAS ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP BEFORE ZONE COULD BE ESTABLISHED THROUGH UN DECLARATION OR OTHER MEANS. BOGAARS REPORTEDLY SAID GOS WAS NOT EXCITED OR WORRIED ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF ESTABLISHING THE ZONE IN THE SHORT TERM, AND WAS GOING ALONG WITH ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS RECOMMENDATIONS SOMEWHAT TONGUE-IN-CHEEK. HOWEVER, INDONESIAN COUNSELOR SUBSEQUENTLY SAID THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION ON WAYS TO MANIFEST THE ZONE AND RECOMMENDATION TO ESTABLISH MACHINERY BILATERAL DISPUTES WERE NOT TIED IN ANY WAY TO EACH OTHER.

6. MALAYSIAN DEPUTY HICOMM YOGARATNAM PLAYED DOWN SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING AS RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT AND TOLD DCM IT WAS CLEAR THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS, ESPECIALLY SINGAPORE, FELT MEASURES TO GAIN RECOGNITION FOR ZONE WERE PRE-MATURE. HE IMPLIED THAT LITTLE WOULD COME OUT OF COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO FOREIGN MINISTERS.

7. WITH RESPECT TO INDONESIA'S PROPOSAL TO PROMOTE "NATIONAL RESILIENCE" SEVERAL SOURCES SAID COMMITTEE REQUESTED GOI TO PROVIDE ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS WITH CLEAR IDEA OF JUST WHAT CONCEPT INVOLVED AND WHAT STEPS WERE

REQUIRED TO ACCOMPLISH IT.
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